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ABSTRACT

A study investigated how much attention mass communication scholars writing in "Journalism Quarterly" give to each of the mass communication industries, to what extent the various media segments are studied, and how data from diverse industry segments are used. All 1,135 articles from both the main and Research in Brief sections of "Journalism Quarterly" published in the 1980s were reviewed. Results indicated that: (1) 72.2% of all the articles had newspapers and/or television among their principal subjects; (2) 52.4% had one or the other as their only subjects; (3) only 6.8% of all articles were not media-specific; (4) 72.9% of the articles examined only one media industry; and (5) only 3.3% of the articles even allowed for the possibility of systematic relationships by studying the interactive effects between two or more media industries. Findings suggest that a systems perspective is needed to restore research interest in the connectedness of diverse media industries. Such an approach should proceed in the "middle range" between narrowly focused studies on the organizational level and grander theory on the social institutional level. Mass communication scholars need to diversify their methodologies and break away from an excessive reliance on single-method studies, particularly quantitative ones. Researchers also need to break the grip of "mediolatry," which not only obscures many media industries but also overlooks systematic relationships among them. (Three tables of data are included; 43 references are attached.) (RS)

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"MEDIOLATRY" IN THE MIDDLE RANGE: THE NEED FOR CROSS-MEDIA CRITICAL RESEARCH

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--Abstract--

"MEDIOLATRY" IN THE MIDDLE RANGE:
THE NEED FOR CROSS-MEDIA CRITICAL RESEARCH

In 1982 the Association for Education in Journalism signaled an expansion of its cognitive domain by adding Mass Communication to its name. However, a content analysis of 10 years of its principal research journal finds Journalism Quarterly dominated by single-industry studies, principally of newspaper and television journalism. This "mediolatry" not only obscures many other media industries, but overlooks the systemic relationships between all media, and their growing convergence, which may sustain ideological hegemony. As it has with women, minorities and other under-researched subjects, the dominant paradigm sets an invisible agenda controlled by chauvinists. Focusing on the trees (and only certain ones at that) has largely blinded researchers to the forest. Researchers need to challenge the abdundance of administrative research in the liberal-pluralist tradition by doing more critical studies which cut across the boundaries of media industries, examine systemic relationships, and empirically test Marxist, cultural, and other critical approaches.

A paper submitted to
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"MEDIOLATRY" IN THE MIDDLE RANGE:

THE NEED FOR CROSS-MEDIA CRITICAL RESEARCH

There are, in the lives of professors of mass communication, certain events which are as dependable in their rotation as the change of the seasons, Oscar night, or the return of the swallows to Capistrano. Once a year brings a flurry of surveys from colleagues across the land preparing last-minute convention papers ("Your help is needed!"). Twice annually students report back the discovery that their internships taught them far more than they ever learned in the classroom. And four times a year the postperson delivers the official research journal of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication. It is almost entirely about journalism. It has almost nothing to do with mass communication.

In 1960 Elihu Katz wrote that too many mass communication scholars envisioned society as an audience of atomized individuals hooked up to the mass media but not with each other (Katz 1964, p. 113). Thirty years later, it could be said that too many scholars view the media as discrete industries hooked up to complex, interactive audiences, but not to each other.

Systems thinking has permeated the language but not always the curriculum and research designs of journalism and mass

communication scholars. "Celebrating diversity is one thing," Blanchard and Christ have remarked; "but we celebrate fragmentation" (1988, p. 11). Most undergraduates are still educated in industry-specific sequences such as newspaper, magazine, and public relations. Many of their programs, according to the 1987 edition of the so-called Oregon Report, are "little more than industry-oriented trade schools" that "instead of providing coherence in understanding the media...[are] fragmenting their efforts" (School of Journalism, University of Oregon, pp. 3, 61). Not surprisingly, faculty in such schools concentrate on single-industry studies--for example, newspapers, broadcast television, magazines, and so on--while paying little attention to their media ecology. Under-utilized is a level of analysis which takes into account the linkages, exchanges, and mutual adaptations that exist between the various media segments.

Entwined with this problem is a preoccupation with certain industries, to the near-exclusion of certain others. This flies in the face of proclamations to the contrary. For example, in an effort to reflect "a breadth of membership activity and interest," the Association for Education in Journalism in 1982 added "Mass Communication" to its name. Journalism Quarterly, AEJMC's largest research journal, declared itself open to "reports of original investigations into any area of mass communication" (59, p. 693, emphasis added). But even a casual

review of JQ suggests that most of its authors are still engrossed with journalism and focused on a narrow range of industries.

In 1985 Zerbinos presented a paper to AEJMC's Communication Theory and Methodology Division in which she decried mass communication researchers' "methodolatry," a term credited to Bell and Newby (1977) signifying excessive reliance on single-method studies, particularly quantitative ones. Like Bell and Newby, Zerbinos urged the replacement of this "positivistic hegemony" with a "decent methodological pluralism." She argued that more use of qualitative methods and the combining of more methods in a single study would improve the testing of theories.

The term "mediolatry" is offered now to denote an excessive reliance by researchers on single-industry studies as well as a lack of variety in the industries they choose to examine. It is argued that scholars who strive to overcome mediolatry, like those who avoid methodolatry, will be able to better test certain theoretical propositions.

METHODOLOGY

This paper is concerned with the epistemology of mass communication, particularly certain issues of its shape and coherence. The research questions are:

1. How much attention are mass communication scholars writing in Journalism Quarterly giving each of the mass communication industries (also referred to hereafter as "media segments")?

2. To what extent are the various media segments studied discretely and in isolation from each other, and to what extent are they studied collectively, i.e., across traditional industrial boundaries?

3. When studied collectively, how are the data from the diverse industry segments used--i.e., accumulatively, comparatively, or interactively?

The entire output of JQ during the decade of the 1980s was examined: 40 issues, from Vol. 57, No. 1 (Spring 1980) through Vol. 66, No. 4 (Winter 1989). All articles from both the main and Research in Brief sections were reviewed. Because of the self-evident nature of the data sought, it was not deemed necessary to use multiple coders. In the following analysis, an article was counted as specific to a media industry only if it gave it substantive attention. Incidental and secondary mentions did not qualify. (For purposes of this study, advertising is counted as a separate media segment, even when it had been

researched within the context of specific media.)

RESULTS

By Winter 1989, scholars had published 1,135 articles in Journalism Quarterly during the Eighties. The overwhelming majority of articles were focused on specific segments: only 77 --6.8%--were not media specific, choosing instead to discuss mass communication or the media in general terms. Moreover, the researchers and their journal demonstrated strong preferences for certain media analyzed in certain ways.

Among the industries studied, newspapers and broadcast television dwarfed all others in commanding attention (Table 1). Newspapers, by themselves or with other media, were among the principal subjects in no fewer than 618 articles, 54.4% of the total, while broadcast television was among the principal subjects in 339 articles, or 29.9%. Adding newspapers and broadcast television together, including articles using both, 819 articles, or 72.2%, of all JQ articles published in the 1980s had newspapers and/or television among their principal subjects.

Magazines were a distant third in interest, with 14.8% penetration, while splinters of less than 10% each went to all other areas: radio, advertising, non-media-specific topics, miscellaneous media (such as electronic publishing, comic books,

recorded music, and business information services), cable television, books, public relations, and movies.

By the end of the decade, JQ was publishing an average of 129 articles per year (based on 1987-1989), and in a typical year all but about 9 of them were media-specific. Of the remaining 120 articles, each year typically saw about 93 concerning newspapers and/or television, wholly or in part. Perhaps 19 would substantively touch on magazines; about a dozen, radio; 10 or 11, advertising. The remaining media industries--cable television, book publishing, public relations, movies, and miscellaneous media, such as comic books, electronic publishing, or recorded music--would each get no more than 3 or 4 treatments, and sometimes none at all.*

TABLE 1 ABOUT HERE

As well as favoring certain media industries, researchers most often worked strictly on the organizational level and treated each industry by itself, without reference to others. No fewer than 827 articles, or 72.9% of all, examined behavior in only one

* Totals exceed 129 because a few articles dealt with multiple media.

media segment--e.g., newspapers only, or radio only, etc. Indeed, as Table 2 indicates, research on more than one media segment was unusual; on more than two, remarkable.

TABLE 2 ABOUT HERE

Unavoidably, these two preferences--for certain media segments and for single-segment studies--converge. Thus, 419 articles, or 50.7% of all single-medium articles published in the Eighties, are studies of newspapers only, without reference to other industries. Another 176 articles--21.3% of all single-medium studies--examine broadcast television exclusively. As Table 3 indicates, no other media industries enjoy as much exclusive attention; the remaining 28% of the single-medium studies are divided among eight different media segments..

TABLE 3

Of the 1,058 media-specific articles published in JQ during the decade, only 231 (21.8%) looked at more than one medium. How the researchers used the data collected in these multiple-media articles was also analyzed for this paper. Researchers use data accumulatively, comparatively, or interactively. Data used accumulatively is simply aggregated by researchers but not manipulated in any other way. In JQ in the 1980s, historical and legal studies most often took this form, but so did an occasional quantitative analysis. In comparative studies, data from two or more media segments are contrasted with each other. For example, scholars sometimes compared "old" and "new" media (such as newspapers versus television, or broadcast television versus cable television) against each other in terms of credibility or uses and gratifications. Interactive studies measure the effects or relationships various media segments had on each other; for example, cable television's effect on broadcast television, or the interaction of advertising and editorial content.

Studies which primarily simply accumulate data, without significant further manipulation, accounted for 132, or 57.1%, of the multiple-media studies. Studies which were primarily comparative accounted for 62 articles, or 26.8% of the total. Thus, only 37 articles--16% of the multi-media studies, and only

3.3% of all JQ published during the Eighties--examined the interactive effects of different media segments on each other.

SYSTEMS THINKING

"While the vocabulary of systems has made a strong impact upon communication science...actual implementation of systems approaches are rare," Chaffee and Berger have noted (1987, p. 118). Such critics of America mass communication research as Oscar Gandy, Philip Elliott and Paul Hirsch have argued the need to turn from a "narrow, fragmented...atomistic" American approach to a broader systems perspective (Jasperse, 1979, p. 39).

Sometimes charged with the peculiar ability to explain everything and nothing at all at once, systems theory is not so much theory as it is a way of thinking about things (Ruben 1972, p. 121). In discussing its value to communication scholars, Monge (1977) suggested that systems theory can provide an "explanatory framework" capable of accommodating a variety of "contrasting and complementary modes of explanation" (p. 19).

The value of systems thinking lies in its focusing attention on "how sets of events are structured and how they function in relation to their 'environment,'" (Laszlo, 1972). In this regard, four organizational properties should be kept in mind when conducting research: (1) Systems are wholes composed of

numerous parts; (2) systems strive to maintain themselves in changing environments; (3) systems grow, change and differentiate, and (4) systems include hierarchies of systems...they are systems within systems. For energy renewal, all open systems engage in processes of exchange across system boundaries; thus, any communication system is

> constantly interacting with its environment to dispose of its product, to obtain materials, to recruit personnel, and to obtain the general support of outside structures to facilitate these functions. There is a constant need for environmental support (Katz and Kahn, 1971, p. 27).

Thus, the connections between parallel systems and subsystems, how their events are structured, and how these systems deal with their media environments need study as well as bounded systems themselves. Among other things, open-systems thinking would focus attention on the "isomorphy of concepts, laws and models in various [media segments]" (Ruben, 1972, p. 122) in the mass communication field.

LEVEL OF ANALYSIS

In Durkheim's famous words, "social facts have social causes." But social facts and social causes can be studied on a number of different levels, with each level of analysis highlighting some phenomena while obscuring others (Ruben, 1972, p. 128). Mass communication scholars in JQ have preferred to focus on the level of individual organizations and their native industrial segments:

primarily newspapers and the newspaper industry, or television stations and the broadcast industry. But, as Berkowitz has observed, "There is a level of organization within societies which cannot be adequately understood by simply observing individual behavior" (Berkowitz, 1982, p. 11).

On the cross-media level, journalism and mass communication scholars have usually treated the entities they were studying as if they were closed systems, functioning in isolation from each other. Scholars may look at the interaction between media industry and consumer, industry and government, or industry and its resources, but all too seldom do they look at the interaction of the various media segments with each other within the institution of mass communication. This is simply unrealistic. Living systems are in constant interaction with their environments; part of the environment of any communication system is composed of other communication systems; the various communication systems that are known as industry segments are, therefore, co-determining phenomena.

Many years ago, Merton (1968) argued for "theories of the middle range," which he described as:

> [T]heories that lie between the minor but necessary working hypotheses that evolve in abundance during day-to-day research and the all-inclusive systematic efforts to develop a unified theory that will explain all the observed uniformities of social behavior, social organization and social change (p. 39).

Merton was calling for approaches which were abstracted enough to hold the potential of generalizability, but "close enough to observed data to be incorporated in propositions that permit empirical testing." This is the "somewhere" which Boulding said must be found between "the specific that has no meaning and the general that has no content" (Ruben, 1972, p. 123). This paper suggests that more theoretical and empirical attention be paid to a network level of analysis which lies in between, on the one hand, specific media outlets and their segments, such as newspapers, broadcast television, magazines and so on, and, on the other hand, the larger social institutions, such the mass communication system in general (for example, in De Fleur and Ball-Rokeach's theory of media dependency [1989]). This level of analysis, the trans-industrial or cross-media, examines the interaction, exchanges, and mutual effects media segments have on each other: newspapers, radio and television on books, and vice versa, for example. Work on this level is framed in systems thinking, which is "basically concerned with the problems of relationships, of structure, and of interdependence rather than with the constant attributes of objects" (Katz and Kahn, 1971, p. 19).

With "rare exceptions...communication scholars have restricted their investigations to intraorganizational networks," according

to Monge (1987, p. 256, emphasis added). But the work of organizational and other scholars powerfully suggests the kind of studies which could be conducted in mass communication, but seldom have. For example, Eisenberg et al (1985) and Zeitz (1980) have examined the communication and informational linkages that link organizations--and, by extension, presumably, similar industries. Because communication and information are the primary products of the mass communication industries, not just managerial data, it would seem especially appropriate to examine these linkages, or networks.

Another fruitful area for study in mass communication would what Monge calls the "densely connected networks of elite power and influence" which control major segments of society--for example, interlocking memberships on corporate boards, not to mention other kinds of activity shared by elites in which reciprocal bonds may be born and nourished.

The "invisible colleges" (Crane, 1972) through which dispersed professionals maintain contact, conduct exchanges, and share cognitively constitute still another trans-industrial area for study.

Whatever scholarly arguments can be mustered, however, the rush of daily events may do more than anything else to blast media

chauvinists out of their grooves. Events in recent years increasingly point to media convergence--a phenomenon which makes even more manifest the connections between the media.

CONVERGENCE OF THE MEDIA

The diverse segments of the mass communication industry are converging in at least four ways: structurally, technologically, cognitively, and economically.

(1) Structural convergence: Newspaper chains, yesterday's bete noir for media critics, are rapidly being overshadowed by the rise of multi-media conglomerates. While consolidation continues to take place inside industry segments, from book publishing to recorded music, the most dramatic action in recent years has taken place across industrial lines. For example, born recently (along with a mountain of debt), was Time Warner, the world's largest media corporation. Among its properties are 16 major magazines, such as Time, Money, and Sports Illustrated; film, record, and book publishing operations; the Book-of-the-Month Club, and cable TV system with more than 5.5 million subscribers. At about the same time, the attractiveness of media properties led Gulf and Western, Inc., to shed both its name and its highly successful consumer and commercial loan operation, the Associates First Capital Corporation, and become simply Paramount Communications, Inc.: 26 book publishing imprints; an educational

software company; five television stations; Paramount Pictures, Television, and Home Video; theater chains; and even sports teams. Hearst, once a big name only in newspapers, now owns such big names in book publishing as Avon and William Morrow & Co. Hearst also owns broadcasters, cable systems, and TV production and distribution systems. The Times Mirror Co. owns not only the Los Angeles Times and other papers, but broadcast and cable TV, books and magazines. Newhouse Communications, owners of newspapers ranging from the Cleveland Plain Dealer to the Springfield (Mass.) Union and News, owns Advance Publications, Inc., which owns the elite New Yorker magazine and major book publisher Random House, which in turn owns prestigious Pantheon Books. Time executives have been quoted as predicting that there will "eventually be about a half-dozen global powers in media" ("Time-Warner Merger," 1989). Obviously, these corporate overlords see commonalities in their properties that media scholars are failing for the most part to examine.

(2) Technological convergence: The new technologies of communication, especially the computer, the satellite dish, and fiber optics, are leading to what Pool called the "convergence of modes...the blurring [of] the lines between the media." Rubin and Wikler (1989) explained:

> Services that in the past were provided in separate ways now share wires, cables, and radio waves. And services that once depended on a single medium, such as print, can be provided in a number of ways (p. 70).

For example, newspapers have become increasingly electronic. Not only words but, increasingly, photographs are being reduced to binary information, which can then be transmitted by satellite from a newsroom in New York City to a printing plant in a Midwest corn field. Newspapers continue to experiment with electronic text and facsimile delivery systems. Meanwhile, book authors on the West Coast, for example, are increasingly writing their manuscripts on computers and sending the data on disk or by wire to publishers on the East Coast, who can then transmit the captured keystrokes to printers in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Within the foreseeable future, the "book" may be available on a pocket-sized display screen, the "newspaper" may be home-delivered via fiber optics.

Dizard (1985) has said we are entering a new information environment, "the Age of the Integrated Grid,"

> in which messages can move in any form (voice, visual, or print) through an integrated, linked network of wire or wireless channels. Wire and wireless channels are becoming interchangeable parts of a unitary information utility, the nervous system of post-industrial America (p. 44).

(3) Cognitive convergence: The popular (if not financial) success of USA Today, the first newspaper designed for the television age; the ripple effect through all the news media of every fad discovered by one of them; and the "novelization" of successful movies or TV shows, are only a few examples of media

symbiosis, the trans-industrial migration of form and content. Books are just one example: the president of a major book publisher has remarked, "In a certain sense, we are the software of the television and movie media" (Whiteside, 1981). A member of a California talent agency says,

> We're putting books together that are predicated on magazine articles, putting books together that are predicated on screenplays, and putting movies together that are predicated on books (p. 71).

In book publishing, the sale of "rights"--arrangements for distribution through other media--has become a major portion of the business. Increasingly, media content is being generated and used in multi-media ways.

(4) Economic convergence: The American media industries are often portrayed as competing with each other--i.e., television versus newspapers, or books versus other diversions. But it would be equally useful to look at how they economically support and complement each other, through what Tuchman calls "cross-referencing" (1988, p. 604). For example, the cognitive convergence described above yields a synergistic effect in the market of media products. It is not uncommon for a book to appear in hardcover, trade, and mass market versions (by as many as three different publishers); re-appear as a broadcast or cable television mini series and still later as a movie for theater release--or vice versa; be serialized in a magazine, and be sold

in audio cassette version. Each of these versions is expected to promote the sale of the others; thus, the whole property in all its manifestations can become greater than the sum of its parts. Moreover, all of this activity typically will be promoted in great detail, not just in the trade press but in the popular media, with authors and other artists appearing on TV and radio talk shows, interviews and feature stories appearing in the editorial columns of magazines and newspapers, not to mention acres and hours of paid advertising. Most commonly thought of as competing for the time and dollars of audiences, the media in fact are highly dependent on each other for their economic success.

A recent example is "lambada," an erotic Latin dance which first appeared early in 1990 as recorded music, was then hyped by cable videos, noted with leering interest by network news, written about in newspapers and magazines, produced as an instructional video tape for dancers, and turned into two movies (which were advertised via TV and newspapers)--all within the space of a few weeks. If lambada had become a major American craze (it did not), books--hardcover, trade paperback and mass market paperback--would have appeared as well (which would have been publicized and advertised in print and broadcast media....)

Tuchman explains:

> The media have additional influence as a cross-referenced, self-supporting structure: They presume and create each other's legitimacy within the general context of a much-legitimated consumerism (1988, p. 604).

TWO PARADIGMS

Two useful approaches for analyzing mass communication are the liberal-pluralist and Marxist paradigms. According to Gurevitch, Bennett, Curran, & Woollacott (1982):

> The pluralists see society as a complex of competing groups and interests, none of them predominant all of the time. Media organizations are seen as bounded organizational systems, enjoying an important degree of autonomy from the state, political parties and institutionalized pressure groups. Control of the media is said to be in the hands of an autonomous managerial elite who allow a considerable degree of flexibility to media professionals. A basic symmetry is seen to exist between media institutions and their audiences....(page 2).

Liberal-pluralism, which the British say is the traditional American approach, has dominated the research of mass communication scholars publishing in JQ. Liberal-pluralism is congenial to administrative research, which concerns itself with whether media managements are reaching their goals efficiently. It does not ordinarily challenge the foundation principles on which the system is based. This contrasts sharply with the Marxist view:

> Marxists view capitalist society as being one of class domination; the media are seen as part of an ideological arena in which various class views are fought out, although within the context of the dominance of certain classes; ultimate control is increasingly concentrated in monopoly capital; media professionals, while enjoying the illusion of autonomy, are socialized into and internalize the norms of the dominant culture; the media taken as a whole, relay interpretive frameworks consonant with the interests of the

> dominant classes, and media audiences...lack ready access to alternative meaning systems....(p. 2).

A key Marxist concept is that of the "false consciousness" of reality by the masses which the media allegedly foster as a form of social control. One does not have to be a Marxist to be find Marxist approaches heuristic. (Related to the Marxist position are cultural/critical studies, which can be equally critical and have been heavily influenced by Marxist ideas, such as that of "false consciousness.") In recent years, several American scholars--who come primarily from the discipline of sociology and do not publish in Journalism Quarterly--have examined the media in light of the idea of ideological hegemony, a concept from the late Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci. Gitlin (1980) has argued for this approach, explaining:

> [H]egemony is a ruling class's (or alliance's) domination of subordinate classes and groups through the elaboration and penetration of ideology (ideas and assumptions) into their common sense and everyday practice; it is the systematic (but not necessarily or even usually deliberate) engineering of mass consent to the established order (p. 253).

In short, it is "the exercise of power over the interpretation of reality" (Philip Schlesinger, quoted in Gitlin 1980, p. 251). This reality, says Gitlin (1979) has sanctified consumer satisfaction as "the premium definition of 'the pursuit of happiness.'" Gitlin and others have shown how the news media, through their policies and practices, have marginalized challenges to the established order and trivialized questions about it:

> Political news is treated as if it were crime news--what went wrong today, not what goes wrong every day. A demonstration is treated as a potential or actual disruption of legitimate order, not as a statement about the world (1980, p. 271).

However, the Marxist tradition in Britain has long been anti-empirical, "unencumbered by a felt need to test ideas with data" (Becker 1984, p. 68). But slowly interest has been growing both in Britain and the United States for positivistic approaches to Marxist theory. As Golding and Murdock (1978) have observed:

> To say that the mass media are saturated with bourgeois ideology is simply to pose a series of questions for investigation. To begin to answer them, however, it is necessary to go on to show how this hegemony is actually reproduced through the concrete activities of media personnel and the interpreting procedures of consumers. (p. 350)

Murdock and Golding believe there are "a number of links" which Marxist scholars should research in an empirical way: for example, links between the work situation and the market situation, links between occupational ideologies and a culture's general values and its ruling ideology. To these might be added the links between supposedly competing media industries, their links with larger power elites, and the ways in which alliances of powerful groups use the media to build their bases for legitimate authority.

In any case, what is important here is Marxist and Marxist-inspired concerns for the linkages, the connectedness, and the systemic relationships that operate among the mass media. Among

the most important of these systemic relationships are those that operate cross-media; this paper argues that scholars writing in JQ should be examining them more closely, and with a critical eye. Testing hegemonic theory, for example, would provide a useful contrast to the prevailing liberal-pluralist paradigm and its abundance of administrative product.

CONCLUSION

Although the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication is open to "a breadth of membership activity and interest," writers in its research journal Journalism Quarterly have taken a relatively narrow perspective. They have preferred to concentrate on newspapers and broadcast television: 72.2% of all JQ articles published in the 1980s had newspapers and/or television among their principal subjects; 52.4% had one or the other as their only subjects. All remaining space, by contrast, was splintered among magazines, radio, advertising, cable television, books, public relations, movies, miscellaneous media (such as recorded music, electronic publishing, business information services). Only 6.8% of all JQ articles were not media-specific.

Mass communication scholars are also apt to talk about an open-systems world while taking something less than a systems approach in their research. Of the 1,135 articles published in Journalism

Quarterly during the 1980s, 72.9% examined only one media industry, thereby disregarding their media environment. And of those few articles which considered two or more media industries in depth, most used the data accumulatively, some comparatively. But only 3.3% of all JQ articles during the 1980s even allowed for the possibility of systemic relationships by studying the interactive effects between two or media industries.

This paper argues that a systems perspective is needed to restore research interest in the connectedness of diverse media industries. Such an approach should proceed in the "middle range" between narrowly focused studies on the organizational level and grander theory on the social institution level. While systems theory would have been an appropriate approach at any time, increasing media convergence is making it imperative. Structurally, technologically, cognitively and economically, the confluence of what had once seemed like separate streams of media activity are shaping the dawning information age.

It is not argued here that single-industry studies do not contribute to critical approaches to the media. Nor have the possibilities for researching newspapers and television have been exhausted. And there should always be a role in JQ for administrative research. As Lemert (1989) has observed, research which critics might label administrative can be useful to society as well as the industries.

But while it is a useful way of looking at things, administrative research in the liberal-pluralist tradition is also a way of not looking at other things. One does not need to be a Marxist to see the utility of testing another theoretical approach, achieving what Merton called a "shift in the angle of vision" (1968, p. 42). For example, this may lead us to test hegemonic theory: that shared understandings and mutual adaptations between the various media industries serve to legitimate and conserve an ideology of "liberal capitalism" that serves the interests of a ruling elite. Although the liberal-pluralist and Marxist (as well as cultural/critical) approaches are commonly thought of as opposing each other, researchers may find they complement each other--at least, as alternating tools for investigation. And, as Monge has pointed out, a systems perspective can provide an "explanatory framework" capable of accommodating a variety of "contrasting and complementary modes of explanation."

Lemert (1989) said (in regard to the news media, at least) that "it is essential that a tradition of sustained, high-quality critical analysis be created" (p. 20). As a study of the pages of Journalism Quarterly makes clear, however, certain practices of researchers impede such a development. Zerbinos observed that mass communication scholars need to diversify their methodologies and break away from "methodolatry," an excessive

reliance on single-method studies, particularly quantitative ones. But this paper argues that researchers also need to break the grip of "mediolatry," which not only obscures many media industries but also overlooks systemic relationships between them which may have major social significance, such as ideological hegemony. Although the media are rapidly converging, many researchers see only trees (and only certain ones at that), and not the forest.

Indeed, until researchers become willing to take ideological hegemony into account in their scholarship, they may well serve as examples of it.

Sept. 4, 1992

TABLE 1

MEDIA INDUSTRIES COVERED
IN JOURNALISM QUARTERLY 1980-89

Media Industry	Number of Articles Including	Percentage of total[1]
Newspapers	618	54.4
Broadcast Television	339	29.9
Magazines	168	14.8
Radio	105	9.3
Advertising	96	8.5
Not Media Specific	77	6.8
Miscellaneous[2]	32	2.8
Cable Television	31	2.7
Books	25	2.2
Public Relations	25	2.2
Movies	7	0.6

NOTE: Because some articles treated more than one medium, a total for the middle column, above, would exceed the number of articles published during the study period: 1,135. Likewise, the righthand column would exceed 100%.

[1] Percentage is of total number of articles published (1,135).

[2] Includes brochures, leaflets, broadsides; comic books; yearbooks and school plays; business information services; electronic publishing; recorded music.

TABLE 2

FOCUS OF MEDIA STUDIED
IN JOURNALISM QUARTERLY 1980-1989

Number of Media Studied	Number of Articles	Percent
Not Media Specific	77	6.8%
One medium	827	72.9
Two media	130	11.5
Three media	60	5.3
Four media	30	2.6
Five media	7	0.6
Six media	4	0.4
	1,135	100.0%

TABLE 3

MEDIA COVERED BY SINGLE-INDUSTRY STUDIES
IN JOURNALISM QUARTERLY 1980-89

Media Industry	Number of Articles Including	Percentage of total
Newspapers	419	50.7
Broadcast Television	176	21.3
Advertising	82	9.9
Magazines	74	8.9
Radio	19	2.3
Cable Television	18	2.2
Public Relations	18	2.2
Miscellaneous[1]	14	1.7
Books	5	0.6
Movies	2	0.2
TOTALS	827	100.0

[1] Includes brochures, leaflets, broadsides; comic books; yearbooks and school plays; business information services; electronic publishing, recorded music (except videos).

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